

THE 1243/10/29
Treacherous Confident:
OR,
FORTUNE'S CHANGE
A
NOVEL.

*Fortune's fickle; yet hope, and she'll be kind,
Fortune befriends the noble gen'rous Mind.*



D U B L I N :

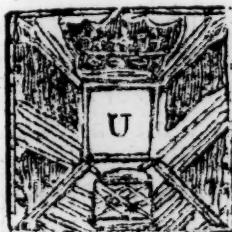
Printed by POWELL,

For SYLVANUS PEPPER, in Skinner-Row, and
THOMAS BENSON, at Shakespear's Head, in
Castle-street, Booksellers, M D C C X X V I I I .





T H E
 Treacherous Confident :
 O R,
 FORTUNE'S CHANGE.



P O N the Confines of *Castile* there lived a Nobleman of an eminent Fortune and Distinction; who had retir'd from the Noise of Business and the Court, where he had distinguish'd himself for many Years in the prime Service of his Prince, by his Zeal and Capacity in the publick Concerns; but finding the Fatigue encreas'd, and Age and Indolency encroaching, he, with not a little Perswasion and Intreaty, obtain'd Leave from the King, who was greatly sensible of the Loss of so faithful a Minister, to retreat with his small Family, consisting only of one Daughter, to the quiet Enjoyment of the Country, there to indulge his declining Years with the agreeable Solitudes the Court had deny'd him: First

assuring his King [that the Change proceeded from no Disgust, or Unweariedness in serving him, but that his decaying Constitution craved Ease and Retirement, and render'd him in a great measure less able to discharge the many Offices of Trust, he had with a chearful Care and Diligence executed for many Years : That since he found himself unable longer to perform the great Weight of Affairs his Majesty had graciously conferr'd on him in his Youth and Vigour, he thought it now his Duty to relinquish 'em to more capable Successors, whilst he offer'd his latter Days to the Praise and Service of his God, who had guided and protected him so successfully in that to his King. — That whenever the critical Affairs of his Majesty requir'd his Assistance, both his Life and Fortune were devoted.

The King was too much affected with the Design of the good *Syphon* ! not to use all the kind Opposition in his Power to dissuade him from it ; for he had lov'd and confided in him as in a Father ; with Tears, Embraces, and the most moving Signs of Tenderness, he urg'd his long Affection, that he had shar'd with him all the Honours of his Court, which were only worthy the Merit and Integrity of the Man ; and would not cease to find additional Favours if they were prevailing Allurements : That he never suffer'd Pain or Pleasure, but his *Syphon* was a just Partaker ; and that if a willing Obedience did not secure his Person to him as a King, yet his Gratitude and Affection should endear him to him as a Companion. — But all this could have no Efficacy on the resolv'd Minister ; who having at length forced an unwilling Consent from the King, departed the Court.

As no Favourite ever had less Enemies than *Syphon*, who had always supported himself by Clemency and Tenderness, in the Eyes of the Popularity, so no one could be more generally lamented ; and if he had any, the

the Edge of their Malice was taken off by this last Step of humble Resignation, and true Greatness : In short, he quitted the Palace with the Sighs and Tears of his Friends, and the loud Acclamations of all indifferent Persons, who admir'd his Choice of a private Peace of Mind, to all the Insinuations of a Court, and the Caresses of a fond Prince : And having directed his Way towards his Country Retreat, about three Days easy Journey, he thither arriv'd with his Daughter, and such of his Domesticks, as were best inclined, and he thought most proper for the plain Exercise of a Country Life.

His House was sweetly situated upon the Banks of a smooth River, in the midst of a Country, fertile with abundant Nature, and had about it all the Embellishments of Art and Improvement to make it delightful : His Gardens large and well occupied, he took Pleasure in cultivating ; and often to himself begrudg'd the skilful Husbandman his wholesome Art and Exercise, which he so long had neglected and contemn'd, for the gawdy Fripperies of Pomp and Pageantry. Thus he was perfectly enamour'd with his easy Way of Living, kept timely Hours, and lived temperate ; grew strong in Body, peaceful in Mind, and seem'd to regain Youth and Contentment, which the tumultuous City had so much impair'd.

Among the many Mourners at *Syphon's* Departure, were *Eristhenes* and *Ihetes* his Son ; *Eristhenes* of all his Friends most dear ! Who, by a long Series of Friendship had contracted an inviolable Love with *Syphon*, was comfortless. He had been shelter'd by him from the King's Rage, at a time, when he would have sacrific'd him to it, for the Death of his Son, which he charg'd to the Mismanagement of *Eristhenes*. The Occasion this : *Eristhenes*, the King's old and successful General, was commanded with an Army to stop an Invasion made upon the Kingdom, which he

A 3

preparing

preparing to do, committed one Wing of the Battle to his Son *Thetes*, then a Youth, but of most extraordinary Conduct and Bravery !

Prince *Archimes*, the King's only Son, being extremely desirous to see a Battle, a thing intirely new to him, prevail'd on his too indulgent Father, to let him observe the Action ; promising not to expose himself to any Danger, a Charge of which is given most strictly to *Eristhenes* : — The fatal Day approaches, both Armies join, and the Fight appears terrible ; at first the young Prince views at a safe Distance the Tragick Sight, hears the loud Din of War, and is astonish'd ; but casting his frightned Eyes around, he spies young *Thetes* at the Head of his Troops, thundering like *Mars* ! Now here ! now there ! He fights, still conquering ! And forcing his Way through thickest Ranks ! But fir'd at length with Emulation, to see an equal Age outstrip his Glory, he catches at his Sword, and plunges in among the Enemy, crying out, *Thetes* ! Honour ! Who gives the deepest Blow ? *Thetes* alarm'd with such Expressions, turns his Head, and sees, with Horror and Surprize, the young Prince fighting like a Madman ! And whilst on every side he deals Destruction, ignorant in Fight, he still exposes his unarm'd, tender Body to the cruel Enemy ; who observing one Man do so much Mischief, all turn their Swords upon him : Now *Thetes*, like a Lion, rushes to his Deliverance ! but in vain he outstrips the Wind, *Archimes* is kill'd ! — The Alarm flies thro' the Ranks, and quickly pierces *Eristhenes*'s Ear, who hears the distracting News, and stands amaz'd, not knowing what to do ; mean time the Enemies gain Ground, when the Thunder-struck old Man calling a little Reason to his Assistance, considers, that a Battle and a Son in one Day, is too much for a King to lose ; so collecting all his Forces, which his exasperated Son had in like manner done, they pour them upon the Enemy, and soon obtain a vindictive Conquest.

But

But now ! what Fears ! Horror ! and Despair ! divide *Eristhenes*, and tear his very Soul——He took the bloody Coarse into his Arms, and washed it with Tears which run in Sluices down his pale Cheeks ; he tore his venerable Hairs, and utter'd such Moans ! as terrified all the Hearers ; often in his Agony crying out, Why was it not himself the Gods were pleased to take, and spared his Prince ? Then committing the Care of the Army to the Captains, He enjoined them to return to the King, and tell him the honest Truth ; adding this, that tho' he could not preserve his Son, whose Rashness was as unexpected as not to be prevented, yet as he had devoted the Lives of his Enemies to please him, so he can his own.

This done, he and his Son, retired privately to *Syphon's*, and there remain'd.

The King was so enrag'd at so deep a Loss, that he, in the Extravagance of his Passion, denounc'd the severest Revenge against *Eristhenes* and *Thetes* ; but the judicious *Syphon* so mollified him by frequent remonstrances, that he consents they may live, but out of his Sight and Knowledge : Since which, the innocent Exiles were supported by the Bounty of their generous Friend.

Almiana ! the Joy of *Syphon's* Life, was now in the Bloom of Age, and happy in the most extraordinary Stock of Virtue, Sense and Beauty : She was the Image of her Father for Temper, Humility, and Understanding ; and the Image of a *Venus*, for Shape, Person, and other Graces.

This agreeable Retreat from the Court, was now no less grateful to her, than her Father, as it eas'd her from the Impertinency of many Suitors, and afforded her more Leisure to think on her dear *Thetes* !

—— It has already been observ'd, that *Eristhenes*
and

and *Thetes*, were oblig'd to screen themselves in her Father's House from the Displeasure of the King; during which Time, *Thetes* and *Almiana* had twin'd their Hearts together inseparably; they seem'd to have but one Soul, one Affection, and to have been cut out for the Happiness of each other; for sure no two were ever more sympathetically form'd.

Thetes was a Youth of an amiable Personage, fine Complexion, beautiful Mien, Stature, Features; and of a most heroick, generous and brave Disposition——War was his Trade, and yet he had a Genius soft and refin'd.——He was as perfect a Courtier as a Soldier, and cou'd flirt the Fan, as well as wield the Sword.

In short, he was the most compleat Youth at the Court, and even in his sort of Banishment, found Means to distinguish himself eminently, as one perfectly accomplish'd; which gave Occasion to many to grumble at the King's Cruelty, in stifling so much Worth and Goodness as was in *Eristhenes*, and Valour and Merit as was in *Thetes*.——This was a secret Joy to *Almiana*; to find the Man she had placed her Affections on, so generally belov'd and admir'd: It also pleas'd her Generosity, to countenance a Person abandon'd and an Exile; but then she reflected on the Unkindness of her Fortune, to place the Center of her chiefest Happiness, at so distant a View, as on a Person obnoxious to the King, without Fortune or Friends.——Many were the interposing Difficulties to their Bliss, yet still she wish'd for more, to make her Love the more apparently Great and Constant; and resolv'd to persevere in her Affection, or wait the Event of Time, and sink with her Love.---

Thus she argued, when her Journey to the Country gave her new Torment, as it was to tear her from herself:——*Thetes*, on the other hand, was run quite

quite to Despair : He, wild with Thought, consider'd her leaving Court, as an eternal Barr to all he could expect, or flatter himself with from her remaining ; he cou'd not frame any Excuse for his going with her, there to stay ; that wou'd give Suspicion to the King of their Amour, who would quickly tear 'em asunder : Besides, his Circumstances wou'd not allow him to make frequent Visits. _____ After this Manner was

he agitated with all the Anguish of despairing Love and bitter Doubts, not knowing what happy Turn could give him Hope, or how he should resolve ; *Almiana's* Page alarm'd him, with his Lady's impatient Command to see him : He was joy'd at the Message, hoping 'twas some Solve to his Disquiet ; but when he approach'd her, she was dissolv'd in Tears : The Page withdrawn, she ask'd him, whether he had heard of her Father's untimely Resolves to quit the Court, and remove to a great Distance ? and whether he had form'd any Expedient to prevent their parting ? or whether he had determin'd patiently to sit down and leave her to her ill-natur'd Fate ? That Question stab'd the afflicted Youth to the Heart ! But when he had recover'd his Surprize, he thus reply'd ; -----

Unkind *Almiana* ! to doubt my Love, or my Sincerity ; can you think my Affection will last only in a Calm ? and that when a little Storm comes I'll shudder, and quit my Hold ; no ! ---- my *Almiana* ! I'll perish first ! first sink to the bottomless Abyss, there to remain for endless Futurity, with perjur'd Fiends, who plight Love once, to be recall'd again : Oh *Almiana* ! did you but know the Stings that pierce my anxious Mind about our Loves, you would not call that honest Heart in Question, that only beats to your Instinct. _____ To you I commit the Guidance of our preposterous Affairs ; instruct me but how to execute, and you shall know, that I have a willing Hand, and Heart fixt to your immutable Direction ! _____

Oh cursed Day ! that disabled me from making a just Claim to all I value ! _____ But wherefore ? Is it be-

cause

cause I cou'd not avert the inevitable Decree of Fate, and save the Prince alive when doom'd to die?----- Or shall I bear it? No----- I'll seize the unjust Monarch by the Beard, and drag him from the Throne, or he shall restore my Fortune, Power, all I had before, and give my *Almiana*! to these desiring Arms.----- He would have gone on, but she interrupted, putting him in mind of the Time allow'd 'em, which was but short.----- That what she could now advise, was to stifle all Resentment and Concern at her Departure: That she would have him pay a Visit to her Father, from his, after some time; and that they must expect for a while the Anger of the King to abate; that if no open Means wou'd be agreeable in the competent Event of Time, she then resolv'd, to throw her self into his Arms, and there meet all their Opponents Rage with Smiles.----- They parted suitable to their Excess of Loves, and having dragg'd their unwilling Eyes asunder, she set out with her Father; he remain'd obscurely with his.

Almiana had not been long arrived in the Country, when impatient *Thetes*, posted thither on the Wings of Love----- *Syphon* receiv'd him kindly, as the Son of his bosom Friend; but told him, that altho' his Familiarity in his House at Court, was taken no Notice of, yet here it certainly wou'd not pass unobserv'd; and desired that he may not venture on another Visit of the Kind, lest it should be detrimental to both Families, or at least the Ruin of his Friend *Eristhenes*. He embraced him as for a long Absence, and desiring him, to assure his Father of his eternal Friendship, took his leave.----- But when *Almiana* heard the displeasing Conference, how was she tormented? She look'd on *Thetes*, then on her self, as two Wretches destin'd to much Misery.----- However, she smother'd her Grief, and directed him to return; for that his Stay was rightly judg'd by her Father to be dangerous, as he had Enemies to his Fame,
and

and busy Spies, that would be glad to buz it in the King's Ear. That she intended, at a convenient Leisure, to let her Father into the whole Secret of their Affairs ; and urge their Loves with an undoubted Success : And would not fail advising him by Letters of the Event. ——— Half dead, between Hope and Despair, he proceeded on his Journey : And then it was she gave Vent to her bursting Soul ! She reflected how miserable her innocent Love had made her ; and thought the Gods a little severe, in causing so great a Distance between her and her Happinels, and punishing her for an amiable and grateful Passion ! She had no Confident to whom she could reveal the painful Secret ; or from whom she could expect Pity or Relief. ——— Thus she languish'd away some Days ; when a new Scene of Love came fast upon her.

Scomes a Favourite, and near the King, had conceived a violent Passion for *Almiana*, before her Recess from the Court. He was opulent, a cunning Politician, and a nice Courtier : He had learn'd Dissembling, Flattering, and Treachery ; and was Master of all the cunning Vices, without the Honesty of the faithful *Syphon*, whose Place he had enjoy'd since his Relinquishment. ——— This *Scomes* had betray'd the King to a Confidence in him ; and making use of his Interest, prevail'd on the royal Goodness, to write by him Letters to *Syphon*, importing his Desire to have *Scomes* allied to him by *Almiana's* Hand ; who as a Person he had long design'd for his many Deserts to be his Son, would without doubt prove agreeable to both.

Big with these Hopes ! He sets out from Court ; and in a little Time appear'd to *Syphon* with the King's Letters. The grateful old Man was overjoy'd to see the Writing of his much lov'd Master, with Tears in his Eyes, he kissed the Name, then perused the Contents ; and having paus'd a little, express'd his Thanks to the
King,

King, for the Kindness he intended him, and assur'd *Scomes*, that his willing Obedience which had always prompted him to a strict Observance of the King's Directions should not fail in this, as it was a Proposal that tended to his Honour and Satisfaction. That he esteem'd *Scomes* as a well-deserving Person; and would use his Influence to effect his royal Master's Pleasure in't; but that his Child should be absolute in such a Choice! tho' he would recommend him to her, as one agreeable to her King, and her Father; and leave the rest to the Direction of her Inclinations: *Scomes* thank'd him; and *Syphon* introduc'd him to *Almiana*.

'Tis impossible to express the various Sentiments of the afflicted *Almiana*! to behold a Rival to her *Thetes*; and in the good Opinion of the King, and her Father: What can she expect now but Death, or the Loss of the Man she loves more than Life? She received him civilly; but her Eyes, her Words, her Mind, were all taken up with big Ideas of her unhappy Love, and obstruct a Passage to her Words: She spoke but little, and that indirect.—— In spite of all her Art to hide her love-sick Mind, still her Confusion betray'd to *Scomes*, the violent Symptoms of a revers'd Inclination to his.—— He was surpriz'd to find so great an Alteration, from what he had observ'd at Court; and determin'd to acquaint her Father of the Chagrin, he had so unexpectedly found her in; hoping thereby, either to learn the Meaning of the unfortunate Change, to his Wishes; or to procure an Admonition from him to her, in his Favour, which might greatly affect a Lady so tutor'd to Obedience. With these Resolutions, he was about to withdraw, when *Almiana* rais'd her dejected Head, and perceiving a sullen Gloom o'erspread his Countenance, quickly discover'd what was the Cause, and what would be the Effect: Trembling therefore! she threw her self before him, and having suppress'd a little

little her swelling Grief, she begun to this Purpose.
 ——— Oh Sir! if there be generosity in Man? let
 it now display its fullest Force, to excite an honoura-
 ble Pity in your Breast, for one most wretched! ———
 I am an humble Suppliant at your Feet, just at the
 Crisis of my Fate; and ready to disclose the Secret,
 on which my future Peace, and very Life depend.
 ——— First tell me, that you'll be my Friend; and
 promise to be tender of the Quiet of my Soul! ———

Scomes, astonish'd at the melancholy Prologue;
 casting his Eyes upon the beauteous Disconsolate!
 rais'd her, drown'd in Tears; and revolving in his
 Mind her moving Speech, of which the true meaning
 he could little perpetrate, and all the Marks she gave
 of deep Distreis; he vow'd most solemnly to succour
 and relieve her, with all his Capacity in Person, Life,
 or Fortune: Begg'd her to relate with haste her Trou-
 ble, that he may fly to serve her; and gave the poor
 distress'd Lady, all the Assurances of an unfeign'd
 Passion and Will to oblige her. ——— And then! the
 too credulous *Almiana*! began the Adventure of her
 Love with *Thetes*; forgot no Circumstance, no fond,
 endearing Interview, or Dialogue between 'em,
 from the First of their Passion: Told such a Story!
 of their disastrous Loves, as wou'd have awaken'd
 Pity in the most obdurate Tyrant, and (which should
 be more efficacious to the Generous mind) added the
 Confidence she had reposed in him, who was a Rival,
 or at least so, before she had made him a Confident.
 ——— That she had intrusted him with a Treasure,
 Dearer to her than her Life! and hoped he wou'd be
 as tender of it as of his own: That since he was too
 well acquainted with her Disposition, to believe any
 Man cou'd ever share her Affection but *Thetes*, he
 wou'd think no more of it, being impossible; but now
 to resign freely his Friendship and Assistance, as he
 had most sacredly avow'd it, and all his Endeavours
 that may be conducive to render her what she cou'd

not be happy without! ——— She also declar'd to him the Reason of her not committing the Affair to her Father, which was not out of fear to his Reprimand, or Anger, he having often assur'd her of his Resolve, to give her a determinate Choice in a Husband; but their Tenderness and Affection to a Parent inform'd her how ungrateful a Proposition her present Love wou'd be to him, as placed on a Person hated by the King; and tho' her Father was personally inclined to *Thetes*, as a meritorious Youth, and Son to his dearest Friend! yet, his rigid Duty, to which he is bigotted, must instruct him to an obedient Aversion to *Thetes* also. ——— And now you have my all! By the sacred Tyes of Honour I conjure you! Treasure it well and hear the inviolable Charge! ——— The Hopes with which you left the Court, being thus dissipated; certainly your Return thither will be soon: You have the King's Ear, and can convey such Thoughts therein, as will raise my *Thetes* to his former Glory. ——— But perhaps I'm partial to my Cause, blind in my own Opinion, and impose what is not to be done: However you can, you must, you surely will be secret as the dead, till the happy Revolution of a little Time, shall wake the erroneous King, to a just Knowledge of my *Thetes*'s Innocence, restore him all his Favours lost, and crown these longing Arms! with the virtuous Hero. ——— Then fell a second Show'r of Tears; Tears! that cou'd not fail moving even the treacherous *Scornes*, to Protestations of all the Sincerity in Man, calling all the Imprecations of the Damn'd upon him if he wou'd cease to labour at a Re-union of the King and *Thetes*; or if a Thought so base shou'd once enter his Mind as the divulging that fatal Secret.

Almiana being a little comforted with the promis'd Delusion, compos'd herself to her former Temper; lest a Suspicion in her Father, should occasion an Enquiry into her untoward Affairs, which would oblige
her

her to a Discovery of what would necessarily give him the severest Uneasiness : For she was a Pattern to Obedience, a Stranger to Equivocation, and knew not how to pervert the Truth.

When *Scomes* had taken his Farewel of her, he went to *Syphon*, and told him, He had found *Almiana* as kind, as fair : That his Business at Court, unluckily demanded his being there immediately ; which he as soon as conveniently, would dispatch ; and then return to compleat his Happiness with the beauteous *Almiana*. *Syphon* congratulated him on his Success, and they parted.

No sooner *Scomes* had turn'd his Back, than he gave Room to all the black Invention that a Man inflam'd with burning Love, and void of Honour, could frame. He consider'd *Almiana* divinely fair ! but divinely virtuous ! and constant to her first Affections : In short, that she was a pining Fool, to slight Wealth and Credit for Poverty and Disgrace ; but so perfect a Beauty, so delightfully form'd ! that he could not live without enjoying her : How was that to be affected ? Her Father would not force her, and a voluntary Love he could never hope for, whilst *Thetes* liv'd : Oh horrible Thought ! must he be sacrific'd, and with him *Almiana* ? And can such Perfidy enter into the Mind of her profess'd Friend ?—With such traiterous Emotions was he shaken from his late plighted Vows of Honour, 'till he arrived at Court ; where he paid his Respects to the King, and gave him the same deceitful Assurance he had done to *Syphon*.

The next Day he sent privately to enquire for *Thetes*, but could have no other Intelligence of him, than that he had rid abroad early that Morning.

No sooner *Scomes* had left Court, upon the Embassy of his Love, than *Thetes* was inform'd of it. It shock'd him first, with all the various Doubts and Suspicions to be apprehended from so powerful a Rival; but his *Almiana's* Truth, still supported him from many and dangerous Resolutions. — However, he could not indulge his Mind with one easy Thought, 'till he had determin'd to post thither in Disguise, where he may observe the Motions of *Scomes*, and be at hand to assist his *Almiana* at any Exigency; and had, the same Day *Scomes* sent to find him out, taken Horse for *Syphon's*.

When the Messenger return'd to *Scomes* without any particular Account of *Thetes*, he ea'sly guess'd whither he was gone; and cursing himself with Vexation to have him snatch'd out of his Reach so suddenly, then to think in how little a time he should be possess'd of *Almiana*, exasperated his Despair: He therefore resolv'd to put it to a speedy Issue, by the horriest Murder! — And ordering fresh Horses, he pursued him with the greatest Eagerness and Precipitation.

How omnipotent is the Preservation of the Almighty Being! which protects the Innocent and Meritorious, from the Snares of the Envious and Cruel. — For behold! *Thetes*, now upon his Journey, impatiently pushing on to reach his Soul's Desire; as he travell'd towards the Evening by the Side of a Wood, heard a mournful Voice, like that of a dying Person; and being excited by Pity, to draw nearer, distinguish'd it to be a Woman's. — The gallant Youth could not listen to so moving a Sound, without examining the Cause; and mending his Pace, he approach'd nearer, 'till coming to the Covert of the Wood, he saw a Servant leading three Horses splendidly accouter'd, to whom he address'd himself, to know

know the Cause of such melancholy Cries : But the wicked Accomplice answering him rudely, *Thetes* struck him with the Pummel of his Sword to the Earth, who as he fell, gave such a Roar as alarm'd his cruel Master, and made him leap from the Ground, where he had supinely thrown a fair Lady ; who, being quite spent with crying to the Winds, and opposing her small Force to the Barbarian, was fallen into a Swoon, and he was now about to execute his villainous Design, when *Thetes's* Coming prevented it. — But the furious Wretch enrag'd by the Disappointment, without Thought or Expostulation, flew at *Thetes* with his Sword, as desperate now, as he was before cowardly ; and before he could prepare, wounded him slightly : But the impotent Monster soon trembles under the manly Arms of *Thetes*, and is poorly oblig'd to request a Being, unworthy its Existence. But his Conqueror, merciful as valiant ! gives him his Life : And having tied the Ravisher and his Servant Back to Back to a Tree, he raised the dying Lady ; who, being come to herself, and knowing her Deliverer thro' his Disguise, thus spoke — What Thanks or Recompence sufficient can I give to the noble *Thetes* for his Assistance ? Which has rescued me from the vilest Ignominy, and saved me from the foul Embrace of the base *Moralto*. — But the Night coming fast on 'em, interrupted her ; and oblig'd them to hasten out of the intricate Wood, into the high Way to Court, whither she had intreated him to accompany her : And tho' the Request was what would bear no Deliberation in granting, and what he seem'd most willingly to comply with, she being a Lady of particular Quality, and Neice to the King ; yet was he much disturb'd at the unkind Accident, that prevented his seeing *Almiana*, for at least a Day or two ; and uncertain, in how much she wanted him. — As they travell'd, she gave him this further Account of *Moralto's* Villany. — He has for some Months

past paid his Court to me with the greatest Ardency, and (tho' I now blush to think it) found Means to insinuate his Passion to me so far, that I could have consented to have made him my Husband; but my Mother had conceived such an Aversion to him, on account of his Principals, which she had learn'd, tho' I was a Stranger to 'em, as would bear no Alleviance: And perceiving him more and more assiduous, caution'd me, on the Forfeiture of my Obedience and her Affection, to entertain any more a favourable Opinion of him; or to suffer his Company; nay, to see him. As I had only look'd on him as a Person tolerably agreeable, the small Impression he had made, easily wore off; and since, 'till this fatal Day, I have not seen him: But riding abroad this Morning to take the Air, a few Miles distant from the Town, the Servant delaying behind, I had got insensibly out of Sight and Hearing, when *Moralto* accosted me. The first Ceremonies being pass'd, he seiz'd my Reins, and with a stern Look and Wildness in his disorder'd Countenance, pronounced the wicked Sentence he would have since executed, without your timely Relief; vowing, that he would satiate his Lust, and be reveng'd on an ill-natur'd Jilt. In vain I struggled, in vain I cried and intreated, the Tyrant was inexorable! His Servant striking the Beast on which I rode, and he supporting my fainting Body, brought us in some time, thro' the most unfrequented Paths, to that Wood, where you found us in; the intended Scene of his Baseness. We no sooner stoppt, than he tore me from my Horse, and threw me scrambling to the Earth; there again, I renew'd all the Pray'rs and Intreaties the Villain would give me time for, and all the Strength of a weak Woman; but being quite o'ercome by his superior Force, my Spirits sunk, and left my feeble Body an easy Conquest to his brutal Rage; when, Thanks be to the all-seeing Providence! you came, by some divine Instinct, to save my burst-
ing

ing Heart ! and rescue me from the most detested Rape ! And know, brave *Thetes* ! that now I burn with Gratitude to make you suitable Acknowledgment for this uncommon Favour : I'll straight to the King, and cast my self at his Feet, never to rise, 'till he caresses you as once he did. ——— *Thetes* return'd her his proper Thanks : And committing all to her Discretion, they being now come near their Journey's End, he took his Leave and pursued his intended Course.

But to return to *Scomes*, who rid full speed to complicate his Treachery, and had now but a small Distance to surprize the unguarded *Thetes*, when that fortunate Adventure diverted him from his Fate ; for whilst he was employed in freeing the distress'd Lady, *Scomes* pass'd by ; and keeping a speedy Rate, about the Close of Night, came up to a Horseman : But so confus'd are the Senses of Wretches prepossess'd with Mischief, and the Reason so eclips'd by the black Thoughts that cloud it ; that he, not descrying the Error, discharg'd his Pistol in the unhappy Person's Heart : Crying, *Thetes* ! here comes a Billedoux from your *Almiana* !

The Servant that attended him, had not been acquainted with the inhuman Design : But when he saw the breathless Body fall, and *Thetes* named, he was struck with Horror. He had formerly been a Servant in the Family of *Syphon*, and had received such Favours from *Almiana*, as had confirm'd in him an honest Heart towards her : He was not intirely unacquainted with her Love ; and resolv'd now, since he could not prevent the Death of her Belov'd, at least not to conceal it, or the barbarous Author : Therefore, taking the Advantage of the Darkness, which happen'd then to be very great, and pretending that his Horse was ungovernable by the Noise of the Shot, he

he soon shifted out of the Observance of *Scomes*, and then changing his Course, set Spurs, and by Break of Day arriv'd with the ungrateful News at *Syphon's*.

I sha'n't here endeavour to paint a Passion, which my Pen can but faintly do; for such was the Behaviour of the frantick *Almiana*, when she heard the piercing Tale, as is easier conceiv'd than describ'd.

After many Excessives, she fell on her Knees to her Father, and beg'd him to hear the Narration of her Tragick Story; and then she proceeded to a broken and interrupted Account of it, with the Cause of her not putting an easier Confidence in him: And lastly, the Treachery of her Confident, which had compleated her wretched.—— The tender old Man was inconsolably griev'd at the Fortune of his Daughter, and the Death of that hopeful Youth: He often invoked the Gods, since 'twas past human Power to comfort her: But she giving a loose to her Sorrow, refused all Mitigation; and begging her Father to permit her paying a willing Tribute to his last Obsequies, he gave Directions for her being carried towards the dead Body; himself following as fast as his Age and Trouble would endure.

But when the bloody Corpse appear'd to wild *Almiana's* Eyes, she lost all Sign of Life; then coming to herself, she fill'd the Air with Shrieks so loud! as if she meant to wake him from the Dead. But perceiving her Spirits almost decay'd, and her End approaching, she beg'd earnestly for one last Embrace of the cold Clay; which being brought to her, she view'd it o'er and o'er, but could not find her lovely *Thetes* there: With stricter Eyes she gaz'd on all his Features, but no Tincture of a Likeness offer'd to her wond'ring Eyes; nor could even Death cause so great a Delusion.

in his well-known Face : Yet still she fear'd ! still sigh'd ! and wept ! *Syphon* being now arrived, declares the same Opinion ; and there is a general Consternation, concerning the important Mistake. Then *Scomes's* Servant is call'd for, who affirms (from Place and Circumstance) that his Master had murder'd that Body for *Thetes*, but was rejoiced to perceive the lucky Mistake. — *Almiana* was notwithstanding anxious for her *Thetes*, and yet survey'd the Body all o'er, but found it all o'er strange ; and they were all in the greatest Doubts and Obscurity, when an Object appeared, that clear'd the mystic Adventure, and dissipated all their Fears. — And now *Thetes* came riding pensively along ; when to his Surprise he beheld the promiscuous Assembly ; and casting his amazed Eyes around, at last fixt 'em on *Almiana* : He flew from his Horse, and having embrac'd her, then *Syphon* ; demanded the Reason of their Confusion ; which they in brief inform'd him, when comparing Notes with *Scomes's* kind Delinquent, they easily detected the whole Villany of the treacherous Confident, they all cast up their Eyes with Surprise and Thanksgiving, and *Syphon* (putting their willing Hands together) address'd himself, thus — Since the Gods have thus countenanced the Loves of this joyful Pair ! and have thus declar'd themselves instrumental in preserving this noble Youth ! to the Joy of us all, and the Rescue of my Daughter's Life : Let us give 'em Thanks, and join the Couple, which is miraculously distinguish'd to be their Will. Come, my Children ! I'll take you in my Arms, and present you to my gracious Master, who will not deny me what I shall request, to make you both compleatly happy : He will not, he cannot, longer refuse his Love to *Thetes*, who has protected a Branch of his Family from everlasting Infamy, with the Hazard of his Life ; and has ever behav'd himself, even in his Exilement, with so much superior Merit : I know the King's tender, compassionate

onate and just; and while he receives him to his former Favour, and joins your willing Hands, will grant ample Justice on the Traytor *Scomes*. Come then! Let's supplicate my good old Master, who will not now swerve from what has been his Characteristick, *To reward the Brave and Deserving! And punish the Treacherous and Wicked!*

F I N I S.

